



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS

PART 18 OF 19

BUFILE NUMBER: 62-5033

FILE DESCRIPTION

BUREAU FILE

SUBJECT Crage Indian Murders

FILE NO. 62-5033

SECTION NO. 20

SERIALS 771 - 797

pages 2966 - 3137

1 Cover Page → 173

STANDARD TIME
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE



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WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER

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 DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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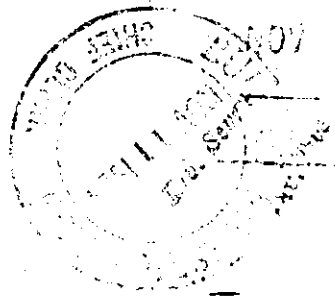
DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON
 S. J. V. MURPHY AND C. R. DAVIS LEFT THIS AFTERNOON FOR TULSA OKLAHOMA
 IN RAMSEY CASE

LAWRENCE ACTING

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62-5033-771

62-5033
NOV 13 1929



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ALL AMERICAN CABLES COMMERCIAL CABLES

and the following Message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FEDERAL BLDG. OKLAHOMA CITY OKLA.

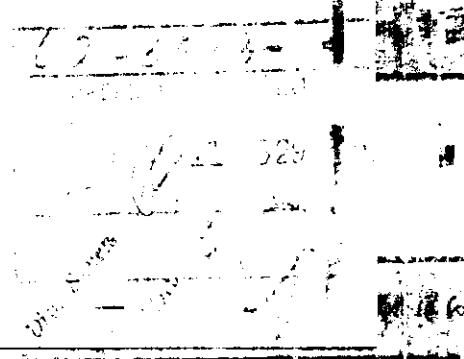
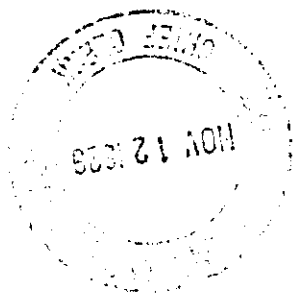
REFERENCE YOUR LETTER NOVEMBER FOURTH AGENTS STREET AND WHEN WILL REPORT KULBERT

CONCERN TO UNITED STATES ATTORNEY TULSA NOVEMBER TENTH IN JOHN RAMSEY OSAGE

INDIAN CASE

DE NETTE

OFFICIAL BUS. GOVT RATE
REG DEPT JUSTICE.



2967

U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

November 12, 1929.

62-5033-712
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
NOV 14 1929 P.M.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

A review of Bureau File #62-5033, pertaining to the murder of one Henry Roan, a full-blooded Osage Indian who was murdered between January 24, and February 6, 1928, and his body found in the Osage Country in the State of Oklahoma, same being an Indian allotment and under the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Government, reflects that:

At the conclusion of the Bureau's investigation in this matter, subjects W. K. Hale and John Ramsey were jointly indicted for this offense, in the Western District of Oklahoma, at Guthrie, during the January term of 1928; subject Ramsey being charged with the direct killing of Henry Roan for the consideration of a Ford automobile and \$500 which was alleged to have been paid to him by subject Hale. Subject Hale was charged with aiding, abetting and protecting subject Ramsey in the commission of said crime.

Both subjects stood trial in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on October 20, 1928, and a verdict of guilty without the death penalty was returned by the jury on October 29, 1928. Both subject were immediately sentenced to serve periods of their natural lives in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. An appeal from the charge and conviction was duly noted to the Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, which court reversed the ruling of the lower court and granted a new trial as to both subjects. Subject W. K. Hale was again placed on trial at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and a jury returned a verdict of guilty on January 26, 1929, and subject Hale was sentenced on the same date to serve life imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas.

Further investigation was made as to the case pending against subject Ramsey and several new witnesses were located who will testify in behalf of the U. S. Government as to certain declarations against interest made by subject Ramsey as to the murdering of Henry Roan shortly after the commission of the act, admitting that he killed Henry Roan at the solicitation of subject Hale. The trial as to subject Ramsey is scheduled to take place on November 12, 1929 at Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

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During the course of the investigation in chief, the Bureau was called upon to investigate the truth or falsity of some ten defense witnesses who were subsequently charged with perjury, two of whom were convicted and sentenced in the Federal Court.

Another investigation was made relative to the activities of one I. C. Hale, half-brother of subject Hale, who subsequently was charged with contempt of court in that he, I. C. Hale, attempted to bribe a prospective juror. He was found guilty and sentenced to serve a period of sixty days.

Further, one John Duke was investigated by the Bureau and was thereafter charged with intimidating a Government witness, and upon a plea of guilty was sentenced to serve a period of thirty days in the Osage County Jail at Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Respectfully,



2970

HN:CAJ

November 15, 1929.

Mr. C. E. Brennan,
P. O. Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

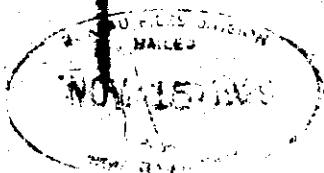
Dear Sir:

Please refer to Bureau telegram of October 25, 1929 authorizing an investigation of the jury panel for the trial of John Ramsey, Osage Indian Murder, November 12, 1929. A report in the matter has not been received to date and it is desired that same be promptly forwarded.

Very truly yours,

Director.

62-5033-773



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El Paso, Texas,
November 13, 1929,



Mr. G. E. Cronin,
P. O.-Box 1536,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Sir:

Reply is made to your letter of November 4 in which you state that a letter to me advising that Special Agent J. A. Street would be needed at Pawhuska on November 10 in the trial of John Ramsey, Osage Indian Murder case, had not been replied to by me with advice that he would be there.

I wish to advise that Special Agent J. A. Street since about August 15 has been on special detail with Agent in Charge Jones at Ilockiz, Arizona, investigating the murder of Special Agent P. E. Reynolds and has not been under my direction. Immediately upon receipt of your letter I transmitted it to Agent in Charge Jones and assured that he had notified you that Special Agent Street would be available at the time and place required. This would account for the non-receipt by you of any reply from me.

Very truly yours,

Louis Delatte
Special Agent in Charge.
E. P. No. 70-25.

DeH/lv
CC-Surgeon.

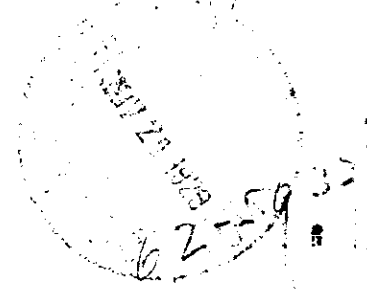
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U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation

P. O. Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

November 18, 1929.



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Director,
Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Answering Bureau letter dated November 15, 1929, which has reference to the investigation of the jury panel in the case of United States versus John Ramsey, Osage Indian Murder, you are advised that on November 4th Special Agents Kisely and Flood, on duty in the Northern District of Oklahoma, were assigned to conduct this jury investigation under the direction of Special Agent John Burger and with his assistance.

United States Attorney Goldesberry, of the Northern District of Oklahoma, had issued instructions to Agent Burger with reference to conducting the investigation.

The investigation was commenced during the week beginning November 4th and completed the first two days of the week beginning November 11th. Data concerning the prospective jurors were furnished to the United States Attorney in charge of the prosecution of the Subject. The trial is now in progress.

Very truly yours,

C. E. Brennan
C. E. Brennan,
Special Agent in Charge.

62-5033-974

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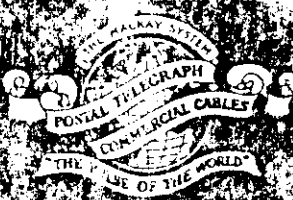
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STANDARD TIME INDICATED IN THIS MESSAGE

TELEGRAMS TO ALL AMERICA



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DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

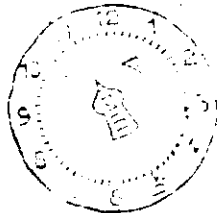
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JOHN RANSEY OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CONVICTED RECEIVED LIFE SENTENCE

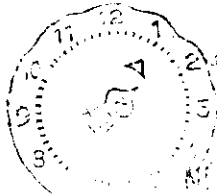
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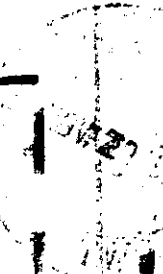


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Postal Telegraph

(THE MACKAY SYSTEM)



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WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER

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DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHN DC.

SPECIAL AGENTS C R DAVIS AND J V MURPHY RETURNED LAST NIGHT EIGHT THIRTY
FRO. PANHUSKA OKLAHOMA RAMSEY CASE

LAWRENCE ACTING

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NOV 21 1929

62-5033

62-5033-776

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THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

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REPORT MADE AT: Oklahoma City, Okla.	DATE WHEN MADE: 11-22-29	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 11/6-21/29	REPORT MADE BY: P. S. Smith
TITLE: JOHN RAMSEY			CHARACTER OF CASE: Murder of Henry Roan, Osage Indian.

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: (O. C. #70-1)

Subject convicted by Jury in the U. S. District Court, Northern District of Oklahoma, at Pawhuska, November 20, 1929, who recommended life imprisonment. Subject sentenced at Pawhuska on November 21, 1929, by Judge Franklin E. Kennamer presiding, to serve a life sentence in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Notice of appeal given by Defendant. Parole report submitted 1-5-27 on former conviction in this case.

REFERENCE:- Report of Special Agent John R. Burger Oklahoma City, November 1, 1929.

DETAILS:- - At Pawhuska, Oklahoma -

Agent was assigned jointly with Special Agent John R. Burger to assist the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Oklahoma in the preparation of the trial of Subject, who stood charged in that district with the murder of Henry Roan, a full-blood Osage Indian, which was committed on a restricted Osage allotment. Said trial began on November 12, 1929, at Pawhuska, Oklahoma and terminated November 20, 1929, with a jury verdict of guilty, recommending life imprisonment. Subject was thereafter, on November 21, 1929, sentenced by Judge Franklin E. Kennamer, presiding, to serve a life sentence in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Notice of appeal was given by Subject.

A parole report was submitted under date of January 5, 1927 for Subject on a former conviction in this case, which was reversed, remanded and re-tried and terminated as stated herein.

CLOSED.

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>[Signature]</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	RECORDED	INDEXED
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: -Bureau -U.S. Atty. Tulsa 1-U.S. Atty. Oklahoma City 2-Oklahoma City		62-5033-777	NOV 25 1929 A.M.	DEC 1 1929
		BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	CHECKED OFF	JACKET
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297E

Department of Justice

Bureau of Investigation

P.O. Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



November 22, 1929.

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62-5033

Director,
Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: Re: JOHN RAMSEY, Murder of
Henry Roan, Osage Indian

I am submitting herewith report of Special
Agent F. S. Smith, Oklahoma City, dated November 22nd,
1929, in the above entitled case, in which it is set
forth that Subject was convicted and sentenced to life
imprisonment. I have not recorded for statistical pur-
poses this conviction and sentence for the reason that
this trial was the result of a reversal of the former
conviction, at which time it is presumed the Bureau re-
corded the proper statistical data.

Very truly yours,

C. E. Breniman
C. E. Breniman,
Special Agent in Charge

62-5033-777

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JJW:
62-5-777

RECORDED

November 29, 1929.

Mr. C. E. Breniman,
P. O. Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Sir:-

There is attached hereto, the report of Special Agent F. S. Smith, dated November 22, 1929, in the case entitled: - JOHN RAMSEY - Murder of Henry Roan, Osage Indian, which was forwarded to the Bureau without your signature.

If this report is approved by you, please sign the same and return it to the Bureau as soon as possible.

-Very truly yours,-

Enc. #637440

Director.

JJW

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JJW
62-338-877

November 29, 1929.

REC 3 1226

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL LURRING:

With further reference to the case entitled: - JOHN RAMSEY - Murder of Henry Hoan, Osage Indian, there is transmitted herewith, for your information, a copy of a report of Special Agent F. S. Smith, dated November 22, 1929, at Oklahoma City, Okla.

Very truly yours,

Enc. 5537439

Director.

JJW
NOV 29 1929
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

2978

P. O. Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,

September 3, 1930.

CKS:b.
70-55-15

Mr. F. George Wright, Capt.,
Osage Indian Agency,
Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Dear Mr. Wright: Re: Earl Savage, et al,
Murder of Charles Whitehorn.

With further reference to your letter of August 15, 1930, and my reply thereto dated August 18th, which has reference to Charley Whitehorn, Osage Indian, murdered on the 27th day of May, 1928, you are advised that this matter was discussed with Special Agent Frank Smith of this Bureau office and he in turn conferred with Mr. Roy St. Lewis, United States Attorney at Oklahoma City. It appears that this Bureau would be without authority to suggest whether or not a reward should be offered for information that may lead to a successful prosecution of the guilty person.

If your informants and the Indian Agency are in possession of any facts that would appear to require a further investigation of the case and such facts are submitted to this office or the United States Attorney at Oklahoma City, it will be appropriate for this office to conduct a further investigation. This Bureau will be pleased to cooperate with you to the fullest extent,

Very truly yours,

C. E. Brennan,
Special Agent in Charge

cc Bureau

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J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

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Okla City Okla Oct 25 1930

Warden T B White
 United States Penitentiary
 Leavenworth Kans

Agent Frank Smith states Ike Ogg likely located at Artesia New Mexico and in event not located there his exact location can be obtained from Alex Street at Bureau office El Paso

Breniman

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APR 19 1932 P.M.

April 14, 1932.

Herbert K. Hyde, Esq.,

United States Attorney,

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Sir:

In answer to your letter of the 26th ultimo, you are authorized to dismiss indictments Nos. 5659 and 5660 in which John Ramsey and William E. Hale are defendants, charged with the murder of one Henry Roal, an Osage Indian.

Respectfully,

For the Attorney General,

MUGENT DOBBS

Assistant Attorney General.

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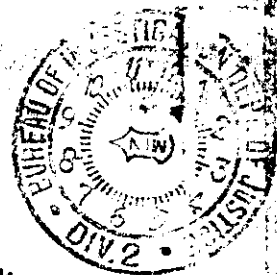
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P. O. Box 1535
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
April 27, 1932



MAY 3 1932 PM

EMB.VFP
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Hon. Herbert K. Hyde,
United States Attorney,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Attention: Mr. Wagoner

Dear Sir:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter
in the case titled United States, vs. John Ramsey,
and William E. Hale, Murder. Thank you very kindly
for the information furnished therein.

Very truly yours,

Earle W. Black, Acting
Special Agent in Charge.

cc: Bureau

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HHC:HCB

November 2, 1932.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

Attached hereto is a copy of a write-up of the Osage Indian Murder cases, which is being sent today, air mail, special delivery, to Mr. Zimmer in accordance with his request.

In the same mail, there is being sent to Mr. Zimmer the music and words for the Indian chant which is to be used in connection with the Sujynamic case, which has previously been furnished Mr. Zimmer.

Respectfully,

H. H. Clegg.

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JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

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U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D. C.

November 2, 1932.

LIC:KOL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

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In the same mail, there is being sent to Mr. Zimmer the music and words for the Indian chant which is to be used in connection with the Sugganah case, which has previously been furnished Mr. Zimmer.

Respectfully,

H. W. Clegg.

[Vertical handwritten notes and markings on the left margin, including several 'x' marks.]

Zimmer

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UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WILLIAM KING HALE;
JOHN RAMSEY

MURDER ON INDIAN RESERVATION

The Osage Indian country lies in the Osage hills, situated in the northeastern part of Oklahoma, a beautiful rolling country covered with tall, green limestone grass, and considered the finest cattle grazing country in the world.

The Osage Indian Reservation, which is identical with Osage County, Oklahoma, consists of a million and a half acres of Indian allotted land, is the largest county in the State, being larger in area than the entire State of Delaware. It is bounded on the southwest by the Arkansas River, and reaches from Tulsa, Oklahoma, on the south to Ponca City on the north, a distance of approximately sixty miles. It is also sixty miles in width at its widest point. To give an additional idea of its immensity, it contains over sixteen hundred public schools.

This reservation was acquired by the Cherokee Treaty from the Cherokee Indians July 9, 1866.

The county seat at the time of the events related in this report is Pawhuska, having a population of eight thousand.

2986

villages in the county are Fairfax, Grayhorse, Hominy, Wynona, Pershing, Skiatook and Helagoncy.

The Osage Indian Agency, with headquarters at Pawhuska, superintends the affairs of the Osage Indians, and attends to the disbursing of amounts due them. The agency is in turn under the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, handling the affairs of all Indian tribes under the protection of the United States Government, this Commission being under the direct supervision of the Department of the Interior.

By an enactment in 1907, 2,209 head rights for duly enrolled members of the Osage tribe were created. This number of head rights remains stationary, although the actual number of the tribe may increase or decrease, and various Osage Indians draw revenue from or are allotted tracts of land based upon their head rights. The original allotment to each Osage Indian consisted of 160 acres as a homestead, which was supplemented subsequently by various other land grants until each head right allotment consisted of approximately 657 acres.

To give an idea of the wealth of the Osage Indians in former times as compared with the large amounts of money received by them after oil was struck on the reservation, the following net per capita payment to each Osage Indian entitled to receive income from the common fund is set out:

Net Per Capita Distribution

1880	\$ 10.50	per year
1900	200.00	per year
1910	250.00	per year
1915	221.31	per year
1920	8,090.00	per year
1921 (the year of the first murder)	8,600.00	per year
1923 (the year of four murders)	12,400.00	per year

To give an additional idea of the enormous wealth of the Osage tribe at this period of time, this tribe, consisting of approximately 2,000 Indians who enjoyed head rights since the discovery of oil on the reservation until June 30, 1921, were paid a total net revenue of \$241,546,289.82, in addition to various other expenditures made in their behalf.

The tribal officers of the Osage Indians are elected every two years, and consist of a Chief and Assistant Chief, and of a Tribal Council of eight.

Certificates of competency were issued to Indians deemed to be able to handle their own financial affairs, the recipients being permitted to dispose of their head rights and allotted land holdings as they saw fit.

The number of actual producing oil wells on the reservation as of June 30, 1920, was 5,855, and had increased to 8,579 as of June 30, 1922. Practically all of the land contained in the reservation

Distribution of the funds to the Osage Indians differed somewhat from that of other tribes in that a common pool was made of all earnings derived from the territory which was divided among all the Indians of the tribe entitled to allotment rights, which at no time during the last decade has totaled more than two thousand.

To illustrate the profligacy of the majority of these Indians, they owed at the end of the fiscal year 1921 \$691,000 to various individuals.

It was no uncommon thing from 1920 to 1925 for the grocery bills of numerous Osage Indians to run from \$500 to \$1,000 per month.

Stomp dances are still indulged in several times a year by the tribe, at which time members of other Indian tribes are invited to attend as guests, and gifts are exchanged between the various tribes and individuals. These stomp dances are the occasion for all night and all day feasts, during which the members of the Osage tribe, as well as visiting tribes, clad in picturesque costumes, dance in a circular formation to the rhythmic beat of the tom-tom. Under the stimulating influence of the dance, which begins in a more or less orderly fashion, the dancers soon wax more enthusiastic and "paw the ground like a bunch of wild steers", after which they will retire for further feasting, during part of which professional Indian dancers will amuse the assembled audience. This dance is participated in not only by the young and enthusiastic members of the tribe, but also by the elder men and women of the tribes, who, perhaps, are remembering the feasts of earlier years and are trying to bring back to their memory

2989

recollection by participating in these native dances.

Marriage by full-blood Osage Indians, whose number constitute between one-fourth and one-third of the total number on the tribal rolls, are still solemnized according to tribal customs.

Osage County and the surrounding territory contains very wild stretches of country, thickly wooded with timber unsuited for commercial purposes, but affording excellent concealment in addition to its almost inaccessible canyons which served as hide-outs for notorious criminals.

At the time of the murders from 1921 to 1923, this country was a haven for all types of desperate criminals who flocked there from all parts of the country due to the nature of the country itself, affording such excellent hiding places for wanted criminals. This criminal element to a large extent was attracted by the enormous wealth of the Osage Indians.

Bandits and robbers abounded. The notorious Al Spencer gang of bank robbers used this country for their hide-out. This particular robber was at one time approached by W. K. Hale, who attempted unsuccessfully to hire him to murder Indians.

Dick Gregg, a member of the Al Spencer gang, and his father, John Gregg, testified against Hale at his murder trial to the effect that Hale tried unsuccessfully to hire Al Spencer, as well as both of the Greggs, to murder certain Indians.

"Curly" Johnson, another notorious bank bandit, was also active in this country, and was at one time approached by a nephew of

William Hale at Hale's instigation, for the purpose of hiring Johnson to murder certain Indians. Johnson was later killed under mysterious circumstances, and the rumor was common that he had been killed at the instigation of Hale, who feared that he might talk.

Another notorious character who shared honors with W. K. Hale as boss of the criminal element of Osage County was Henry Grammer, notorious bad man who had complete control of the Osage liquor traffic, and who was reputed to keep certain woods surrounding his land lighted up by means of a privately owned power plant, where he worked a gang of criminals who had fled from all over the United States day and night in making illicit liquor.

Grammer died in an automobile accident prior to the investigation of the murder cases, and at the time of his death had on his person \$15,000 in cash. He is supposed to have been murdered by a notorious bandit who was with him at the time of the accident, but no investigation was ever made by local authorities as his death was considered a good riddance. There was a gapping wound under his left arm pit.

A bandit who was serving time in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, recalled while being interviewed by a Special Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation that during the period of the murders he attended a gathering of thirty-two nationally known bank bandits and train robbers in a group of woods in the Osage country, where they were in hiding as fugitives from justice, and during their sojourn they often engaged in pistol practice, skill in the use of pistols being

absolutely necessary to their profession at this time.

Prior to the Osage Indian tribe becoming immensely wealthy over night through discovery of oil on the reservation, William K. Hale, known as "Bill" Hale and sometimes dubbed "King of the Osage", drifted into this territory from Texas, an uneducated, more or less uncouth cow puncher and cattle thief, but possessed of a dominating personality.

He finally succeeded in controlling 45,000 acres of select Osage grazing land by means of leases, and acquired 5,000 acres outright. Eventually he became a millionaire, who dominated local affairs and seemingly could not be punished for any of the many crimes which were laid at his door.

His method of building up power and prestige was to put various individuals under obligation to him by means of gifts or favors shown to them. Consequently, he had a tremendous following in the vicinity composed not only of the riffraff element which had drifted in, but of many poor and substantial citizens.

The various characters concerned in this story were the following:

WILLIAM ("BILL") KING HALE, master mind behind the murders investigated, 55 year old typical westerner of medium stature, black hair, turning gray, brown eyes, prepossessing figure, neat dresser, ruddy complexion, who affected a military air with a soldier's bearing, short cut, well-groomed mustache, the owner of a fine automobile, a member of the Osage Indian tribe, a member of the Osage Indian tribe, a member of the Osage Indian tribe.

2992

in the middle of his immense holdings.

JOHN RAMSEY, bootlegger, fifty year old typical rough type western criminal, who had served a penitentiary term for rustling cattle, former member of the notorious Henry Grammer gang, actual murderer of William E. Smith, Rita Smith, Nettie Brookshire, and Henry Roan.

ERNEST BURKHART, "squaw man" in his early thirties, nephew of W. K. Hale, completely dominated by Hale, a weak-willed individual who did his uncle's bidding, married to Mollie Burkhart, full-blood Osage Indian, daughter of Lizzie Q, wealthy in her own right. A very friendly person, who seemingly thought he had done no wrong in participating in the crimes he admitted. Implicated in the murder of Henry Roan and of the W. E. Smith family. He was the first to confess the true state of affairs, giving Special Agents of this Bureau their first real lead in the case implicating Hale and Ramsey.

KELSEY MORRISON, "squaw man" 35 years old, a neat appearing man of very bad reputation, married to a full-blood Osage Indian woman named Katherine Cole. Admitted murder of Anna Brown, with help of Bryan Burkhart at instigation of W. K. Hale.

BRYAN BURKHART, a "squaw man," younger brother of Ernest Burkhart, who turned State's evidence in the State courts.

DEVNEY SELPH, "squaw man" former husband of Cecilia Hieheart, full-blood Osage woman, who was hired by W. K. Hale to murder

2993

Indian, but who lost his nerve and later confessed.

LIZZIE Q, also known as Lizzie Kile, full-blood Osage Indian between 70 and 80 years of age, immensely wealthy in her own right, mother of Anna Brown, Mollie Burkhart, wife of Ernest Burkhart, and Rita Smith, wife of W. E. "Bill" Smith. This Indian woman and her three daughters were all immensely wealthy, each being the owner of Osage head rights, and receiving royalties from oil and gas wells.

The Government theory in the investigation of the murder cases was that W. K. Hale dominated his nephew, Ernest Burkhart, the husband of Mollie Burkhart, and planned to do away with Lizzie Q and her remaining two daughters, and finally Burkhart's own wife, so that Burkhart would fall heir to the head rights of all four, Burkhart being under the domination of Hale, who would, if necessary, eventually have killed Burkhart, and as a result, acquired the wealth of these four Indian women.

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Just prior to the investigation of the Osage Indian Murder Case by the United States Bureau of Investigation, two dozen Osage Indians died under suspicious circumstances, and the entire Osage Indian Tribe, as well as the white citizens of that locality, were terror stricken and in fear of their lives. This made the task of this Bureau's Agents extremely difficult because law-abiding citizens actually feared to converse with them relative to the recent killings.

MURDER OF ANNA BROWN.

Anna Brown, divorced daughter of Lizzie C, was murdered on May 22, 1921, three miles from the town of Fairfax, on the pasture lands of W. K. Hale, in the bottom of a small ravine. Bureau Agents found from investigation that she was murdered by Kelsey Morrison and Bryan Burkhart, who had driven her to this lonely spot. Bryan Burkhart held her after she had been gotten into a drunken stupor, while Kelsey Morrison shot her in the back of the head with a .32 automatic pistol which had been furnished him for this purpose by W. K. Hale a few hours prior to the actual murder. These facts were developed by confession of Kelsey Morrison himself, who testified to these facts at the trial of W. K. Hale for murder, and was substantiated by the confession of his wife, Katherine Cole Morrison, a full-blood Osage Indian. Mat Williams, a bootlegger, substantiated these facts also on the witness stand, stating that he saw her murdered while delivering whiskey ordered by Morrison and Burkhart.

MURDER OF HENRY ROAN

Henry Roan was a picturesque full-blood Osage Indian, six feet tall, and fine looking specimen . He wore his hair in plaits down his back, and was an inveterate drunkard who stayed away from his home for weeks at a time. William K. Hale, about a year prior to the murder of Roan, had taken out a \$25,000 life insurance policy on Roan. John Ramsey made friends with Roan by means of Roan's fondness for whiskey, and took him out several times, ostensibly to furnish him whiskey, but in reality to murder him. Upon each occasion, Ramsey lost his nerve, but finally persuaded Roan on one of these trips to drive to the bottom of a canyon out of sight of the road, and proceeded to shoot Roan through the back of the head with a .45 automatic pistol, which he had obtained from the arsenal of Henry Grammar. This occurred on January 26, 1923. It was developed by Bureau Agents that Hale hired Ramsey to commit this murder, buying him a \$500 Ford automobile prior to the murder, and paying him \$1,000 in cash after the murder had been committed. It developed also that Henry Grammar had furnished John Ramsey to Hale as the killer. Roan was found several days later sitting upright in his car, frozen stiff. The facts surrounding the murder of Roan were proven by John Ramsey's own confession, as well as a confession of Ernest Murphart, nephew of William Hale, who was present at all negotiations relative to the murder of Roan. John Ramsey did not even know Roan's name at the time he murdered him, but had simply had Roan pointed out to him as the

2996

Indian who was to be "bumped off", by William K. Hale, on the streets of Fairfax, Oklahoma. Henry Roan was the only one of the five persons proven to have been murdered at the instigation of W. K. Hale, who was killed on restricted Indian land, thereby giving the United States jurisdiction over the crime. Roan's murdered body was found upon the restricted homestead allotment of Rose Little Star, whose Indian name was Tom-Pah-Pe.

MURDER OF WILLIAM E. "BILL" SMITH;
his wife, RITA SMITH, Osage Indian;
NETTIE BROOKSHIRE, their white servant.

William E. "Bill" Smith stated openly that he believed W. K. Hale had killed Henry Roan and Anna Brown, and would not hesitate to kill the last of Lizzie Q's children. In addition to this fact, William E. Smith and W. K. Hale had had an argument about \$6,000 which Smith claimed Hale owed him. On the night of March 10, 1923, the house of William E. Smith was blown up, having a five-gallon can of nitro-glycerin exploded under it, blowing the house to atoms and killing Rita Smith and Nettie Brookshire instantaneously, while mangling the body of William E. Smith horribly. He lived a few hours and stated his belief that Hale had had him killed.

It was developed through investigation by Bureau Agents that W. K. Hale had hired John Ramsey and Asa "Ace" Kirby to murder William E. Smith, and had subsequently paid Ramsey approximately \$1600. These

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October 13, 1932

R E VETTERLI
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
905 FEDERAL RESERVE BANK BUILDING
KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN FROM AGENT BURGER AND FORWARD SPECIAL DELIVERY AIRMAIL
ANY INTERESTING DETAILS AND SIDELIGHTS FOR RADIO BROADCAST OF OSAGE
INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

WMA

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FB:MSK

October 18, 1932

P. H. COLVIN
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
509 OKLAHOMA SAVINGS BLDG.
OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN FROM AGENT FRANK SMITH AND FORWARD SPECIAL DELIVERY
AIRMAIL ANY INTERESTING INFORMATION AND SIDELIGHTS FOR RADIO BROADCAST
OF COWAGE INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL ALSO DESIRE OBTAIN STATUS
ANY APPEALS STILL PENDING

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

RECORDED

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TFB:MSK

October 18, 1932

GUS T JONES
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
1115 SAITH-YOUNG TOWER BUILDING
SAN ANTONIO TEXAS

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN IMMEDIATELY FROM AGENT STREET AND FORWARD SPECIAL
DELIVERY AIRMAIL ANY INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS AND FEATURES FOR RADIO
BROADCAST OF OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

RECORDED

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INVESTMENT BLDG.
 14th & K STS., N.W.
 One National 6600 BR.7
 STANDARD TIME
 INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

Postal Telegraph
 THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM



This is a full-rate Telegram, Cablegram or Radiogram unless otherwise indicated by signal in the check or in the address.

DL	DAY LETTER	
NL	NIGHT LETTER	
NM	NIGHT MESSAGE	
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE	
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER	
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER	
	RADIOGRAM	

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 DIRECTOR, UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION=

1932 OCT 19 PM 5:48

W.H.A.S.
 [Handwritten initials]

OUR TELEGRAM EIGHTEENTH OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS WILL ENDEAVOR MAIL
 MATERIAL TOMORROW NIGHT IMPOSSIBLE TO DO SO EARLIER=

COLVIN.

10-5123-782
~~10-2733-141~~

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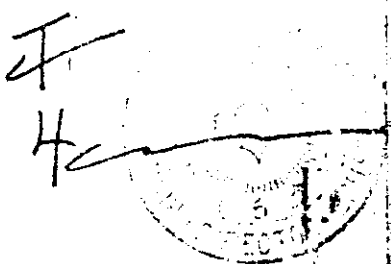
Telephone Your Telegrams to Postal Telegraph

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U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation

P. O. Box 1835
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
October 21, 1932



OCT 22 1932 AM

RHC:MCE

Director,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

In response to your telegraphic request for information from Special Agent F. S. Smith on the Hale-Ramsey Osage Indian Murder Cases, please find inclosed data furnished by Agent Smith, which was gotten up hurriedly and in rough form. Owing to the apparent necessity for getting this to you quickly, I am not taking time to revise same.

I trust that the information furnished will enable the preparation of suitable material for broadcasting. We would be very grateful if you would advise us when to expect the broadcast on this matter.

Very truly yours,

R. H. Colvin,
Special Agent in Charge.

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U. S. Bureau of Investigation

Department of Justice

905 Federal Reserve Bank Bldg.,

Kansas City, Missouri.

AIR MAIL.

October 21, 1932.

SPECIAL DELIVERY.

Director,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D.C.

62-5033-7831
 12-24334-7
 BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 OCT 23 1932
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Dear Sir:

OCT 27 1932

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Reference is made to Bureau telegram of October 18, 1932, directing that this office obtain from Agent J. R. Burger, and forward, any interesting details and sidelights for radio broadcast on Osage Indian Murders, W. W. Hale, et al. Attached hereto is the memorandum, dictated today by Agent Burger, requested in Bureau telegram of reference.

In connection with the unreasonable delay in submitting this information, it is stated that upon receipt of the telegram of October 15th, the writer endeavored to communicate with Agent Burger, who was then on sick leave and thought to be confined to his home. It was discovered upon investigation that Agent Burger had left Kansas City and his exact location was not known until sometime later, he being located by this office the night of October 20th. Agent Burger provided this office with no address during his absence from home, and the writer believes that appropriate explanation should be made by Agent Burger, and will, therefore, request that he prepare such statement as he may have and furnish the same to the Bureau upon his return to duty on Monday, October 24th.

It is the writer's impression at this time that Agent Burger did not intentionally fail to furnish an appropriate address and that probably his failure to do so was to some extent attributable to his illness. This, however, will probably be gone into more in detail by Agent Burger when his explanation is submitted to the Bureau.

Very truly yours,

Chapman Fletcher
Chapman Fletcher

Acting Special Agent in Charge.

CF-ebc

Encl.

Handwritten notes and signatures

Handwritten notes and signatures

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U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation

1218 Smith Young Tower Bldg.,
San Antonio, Texas,
October 23, 1932.

62-5033-784

Director,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Complying with your telegram of October 18th,
there is attached hereto a statement giving the interest-
ing sidelights and features for radio broadcast of Osage
Indian murders - W. M. Hale, et al.

This matter has been delayed on account of Agents
being absent from headquarters in the field.

Very truly yours,

Gus T. Jones

Gus T. Jones,
Special Agent in Charge.

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INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS AND FEATURES IN CONNECTION WITH
OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CASES, IN STATE OF OKLAHOMA.

As furnished by Special Agents C. R. Davis, J. A. Street and
J. V. Murphy.

During the investigations of the murders of Osage Indians in the State of Oklahoma, and the trials of the defendants, a prominent cattleman, his nephews and a cowboy employee of the cattleman (W. K. Hale, Ernest and Byron Burkheart and John Ramsey), in connection with the employing of persons by this cattleman to kill an Indian woman and her white husband, this cattleman contacted with a notorious bank robber (Al Spencer) and his gang (Dick Gregg, et al) and promised this bank robber \$5000 to do this job. The cattleman was to meet the Bank Robber and his gang in a pasture and deliver the \$5000 in cash. Through investigation it was learned that the bank robber planned meeting the cattleman in the pasture and relieve him of the \$5000 without doing the killing, well knowing that the cattleman would be in a position where he could not very well report the robbery. However, upon meeting the cattleman at the agreed place, the cattleman, being aware of the reputation of the bank robber, did not bring the \$5000 with him, but brought with him a henchman (Fred Rowe). The cattleman stated to the bank robber that he would place the \$5000 in a bank in the name of his henchman, to be delivered to the bank robber when the job was done. The bank robber, upon learning the cattleman was too wise to bring the \$5000 in cash with him, told the cattleman that he "may rob a bank or a train, but he has never fallen so low to murder a woman for money, even though she be an Indian." This closed the incident with the bank robber. Later the cattleman secured the services of his cowboy John (John Ramsey) and a different bank robber (Asa Kirby), who placed several quarts of nitroglycerine (called "soup" by bank robbers) in the basement of the home of the Indian woman at night, and blew up the house, killing the Indian woman, her white husband and a servant girl.

Some time after this murder was committed, the cattleman, believing that "dead men tell no tales", ribbed this bank robber to commit a robbery by telling him where he could secure some diamonds by robbing a grocer residing near the Oklahoma-Kansas State line, and then informed the grocer that he overheard a robber planning to rob him on a certain date, resulting in the grocer killing the bank robber when he called to rob the grocer of his diamonds, and forever closing the mouth of the bank robber regarding the blowing up of the home of the Indian woman.

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*Travis
to
Hale*

An inmate of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary (Bert Lawson) made a confession that he had been employed by the Cattleman to place nitroglycerine in the basement of the Indian woman's home (Rita Smith) and blow it up, killing the Indian woman, her white husband and their servant girl. This confession, corroborates in some of its details, was the result of the State authorities filing murder complaints against the Cattleman (W. K. Hale and his Nephew (Ernest Burkheart)). While the Cattleman and his nephew were in custody of State authorities, they were interviewed by Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation and the nephew made a confession, revealing the names of the persons who had actually committed these murders, one of which was his Uncle, the Cattleman. After considerable investigation by Agents of this Bureau the confession of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary ^{inmate} was found to be false, and to have been made by the inmate for the sole purpose of securing a pardon or parole from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, where he was serving a seven year sentence, and to be given immunity for his participation in this murder case, as well as obtain a better bill of fare than what he had been receiving in the State penitentiary. This inmate, while out of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, in custody of State and Federal officers, had a weakness for T-bone steaks and French fried potatoes three times daily, at the expense of the Federal officers.

*Black
tour*

On one occasion while this inmate was in a Y. M. C. A. cafeteria for dinner, he stated he had never been in a cafeteria before, and he was informed to take a tray and place on it whatever he wished to eat as he passed down the food counter. Upon arriving at place where the meats were obtained, the inmate called attention to fact that he did not have room enough on his tray to place his meats and vegetables, and it was found that he had four pieces of pie and three pieces of cake on his tray. He was requested to remove all but one piece of pie.

After continuous search for an important witness in the George Indian murder cases, this witness (Dewey Selph) was located in Syracuse, Kansas, jail, where he was being held for passing a bad check. This witness was released by the Syracuse authorities to a Federal officer in order that he might be taken to Oklahoma to testify in the Indian murder cases, and upon getting ready to depart from the Syracuse jail it was found that the witness had no shoes, as the ones he had were worn out, and it was necessary for the Federal officer to purchase a pair of shoes for the witness before departing from Syracuse.

While this same witness was being held at Guthrie, Oklahoma, with inmates of the Kansas State penitentiary, also witnesses in the Indian murder cases, information was received that an escape was being planned by the Kansas State penitentiary inmates, and they were removed from the Guthrie jail, and examination revealed that some of the cell bars had been partly sawed. The witness from Syracuse was allowed to remain in the Guthrie jail, he being the only occupant. After a day or two it was discovered that this witness had escaped from the Guthrie jail, by removing the partly sawed bars of the cells, and had left town.

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0 This witness was located by a Deputy United States Marshal and an
 1 Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation the following day
 2 while he was standing in a barrel at a tailoring shop in Pawhuska,
 3 Okla., about 120 miles from Guthrie, to where he had gone to have
 4 his suit pressed before calling on his lady friend. This witness
 5 stated he was lonesome by himself in the Guthrie jail and he wanted
 6 to see his lady friend, and that after he had called on her he intended
 7 returning to Guthrie.

8
 9 During the course of the trial of the Osage murder cases at
 10 Oklahoma City, this same witness was being held at a hotel in the
 11 custody of a Guard from the Federal Penitentiary. One night, during
 12 the trial, this witness was seen and recognized by an Agent of this
 13 Bureau, on the street in Oklahoma City about midnight a considerable
 14 distance from his hotel and by himself. Upon noticing that the
 15 Agent recognized him, the witness hurriedly returned to his hotel,
 16 followed by Agent. It was learned that this witness had walked away
 17 from his guard while the guard was indulging in a little party.

18 A day or so later, while this same witness' guard was indulging
 19 in another party at his hotel room, this witness took French leave,
 20 purloining the guard's pistol, stole an automobile from the streets
 21 and made his escape from Oklahoma City. This witness was taken into
 22 custody by Arkansas state authorities when they recognized him as
 23 being an escapee from the Arkansas State Penitentiary, prior to his
 24 apprehension at Syracuse, and the witness was returned to the Arkansas
 25 State Penitentiary to complete his sentence, from which institution
 26 he subsequently attempted to escape and was killed.

27
 28 During the trial of the defendants in the Osage Indian murder
 29 cases, one Matt Williams, a native of Northern Oklahoma cattle country
 30 and formerly closely associated with the King of the Osage Hills and
 31 the Master Mind of the murders (W. K. Hale), while testifying for the
 32 Government, was asked by defense attorney on cross examination - "Isn't
 33 it a fact, Mr. Williams, that you have stole cattle while in the cattle
 34 business at Halston, Okla.?" To which witness Williams replied -
 35 "When I first entered the cattle business it was on an honest basis,
 36 but after Bill Hale and other cattle thieves stole me out, I realized
 37 that I could not succeed, so I put in with Lill and his gang."

38
 39 At another time while this witness Williams was testifying, upon
 40 cross examination, the defense attorney asked him if he had ever been
 41 married, to which he replied that he had been married three times.
 42 The defense attorney asked him if he contemplated marriage again, and
 43 the witness stated that he did just as soon as the opportunity present-
 44 ed itself.

45
 46 During the trial of these cases, a witness for the defense, who
 47 resided near Ripley, Okla., the same town where the cowboy employee
 48 of the cattleman resided, offered testimony in an effort to prove that
 49 the cowboy did not murder Henry Roan, Osage Indian, in Osage County
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as the witness saw him in Ripley on the date Roan was murdered. This witness stated that he recalled seeing the cowboy on this date and introduced in substantiation of his statement, a calendar sheet on which was marked the date that Roan was murdered, and the date he claimed he saw the cowboy in Ripley. Upon cross examination this witness further stated that the marking of the date on the calendar represented the date on which his wife had set a hen, and it was also the same date he had seen the cowboy (John Hamsey) in Ripley. However, the witness was unable to recall any other dates that his which had set hens. The witness was subsequently convicted for perjury.

While a witness from Osage County, Oklahoma, was testifying for the Government in the Osage Indian murder cases, the defense attorney, upon cross examination, accused this witness with having committed the murder of Henry Roan, Osage Indian, which statement was made by defense attorney with idea of confusing the jury. Some time after the trial was over, this witness met the defense attorney in the witness' home town in Northern Oklahoma, and gave him a severe beating, for which the witness was arrested and paid a fine of \$10.00 for assault and battery. The townspeople remarked that the witness was fined the same amount that a man would be fined for whipping a mule.

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AUG -6 1932

Hon. Jos. K. Moyer,
Chairman, Special Advisory Committee,
Internal Revenue Bureau,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Moyer:

In connection with the refund claim of Charles Tinker, an Osage Indian, local counsel representing Osage Indians in income tax matters have asked that we write you a letter giving certain information relative to Osage mineral rights, the disposal of leases of same, division of receipts therefrom, etc., including the amount of bonus money received for leases from the year 1924 to the year 1928, inclusive. The following is submitted:

The oil, gas, coal and other minerals underlying the Osage Reservation were reserved to the Osage tribe in common when provision was made for allotting the surface of their lands, by provisions contained in section 3 of the act of June 26, 1906 (34 Stats. L. 539-543), for a period of twenty-five years from and after April 8th, 1906; and the leasing and development of the mineral rights were to be accomplished through the Osage tribal council with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior under such rules and regulations as he might prescribe. The provisions of said act affecting the mineral estate were amended by the act of Congress, approved March 3, 1921 (41 Stats. L. 1249) and the period of reservation of the minerals for the benefit of the Osage tribe was extended until April 7, 1946, with a continuation of the authority in the Secretary of the Interior to approve leases and prescribe necessary regulations to govern mineral leasing activities. A further extension of the reservation of the mineral rights for the communal benefit of the tribe, with a continuation of authority thereunder in the Secretary of the Interior, for leasing, until April 8, 1958, was effected by the act of March 2, 1929 (45 Stats. L. 1478). The last mentioned act provides "and the royalties and bonuses arising therefrom shall belong to the Osage tribe of Indians and shall be disbursed to members of the Osage tribe or their heirs or assigns, as now provided by law, after reserving

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such amounts as are now or may hereafter be authorized by Congress for specific purposes.

The secretary of the Interior by regulations prescribed that the method of leasing for oil and gas mining purposes on the reservation should be by public auction; and auction sales have accordingly been regularly held on the reservation, through which the leases have been acquired. The areas advertised for lease sales are selected by the Superintendent of the Osage Indian Agency, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, with the aid of oil and gas engineers or field employees under his jurisdiction. The selection of lands to be offered are made with a view, of course, for best serving the interests of the Osage tribe and of attracting the highest possible bonus price, and to the eventual leasing and developing of the entire reservation in a manner most profitable to the Indians. As a rule the lands are offered in 160 acre tracts. No tract is developed to the point of actual production prior to offering it for lease but in many instances such tracts are known to be in producing areas, proven by tracts previously leased and drilled. The plan of selecting the lands and leasing the reservation has been with a view to developing the entire reservation in such a way as to prove the oil value of the lands as far as possible prior to advertising them for lease; thus to a large extent the checker-board method of offering alternate tracts has been followed, and as wells have been drilled adjoining tracts have been offered as conditions justify.

The bonus receipts from lease sales beginning with the year 1924, and ending with the year 1928, were as follows:

<u>Dates of sales.</u>	<u>Bonus received.</u>
March 18-19, 1924,	\$14,144,000.00
June 30, 1924,	2,249,618.75
December 18, 1924,	1,035,875.00
March 18, 1925,	667,450.00
March 17-18, 1926,	3,990,355.00
September 30, 1926,	2,116,850.00
March 28, 1927,	2,421,650.00

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3	December 12, 1927,	2,267,550.00
4	March 26-29, 1928,	2,427,850.00
5	September 27, 1928,	974,293.75
6	December 11, 1928,	431,785.00.
7		

8 The receipts from Osage mineral leases are divided per
 9 capita among the individuals, or their heirs, whose names appear
 0 upon the approved Osage tribal rolls, pursuant to the requirements
 1 of existing law.
 2

3 For your further information there are enclosed several
 4 copies of the leasing regulations applicable to oil and gas mining
 5 leases on the Osage Reservation; and also copies of advertisements
 6 used in connection with auction sales.
 7

8 Sincerely yours,
 9
 0 C. J. RHOADS

1 Commissioner.

2 SWL-2-21c)

3 Inclosure 162832

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 10 APPROVED: AUG 9 1932
 11 (SIGNED) JES. W. DIXON,
 12 Acting Secretary.
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COPY

PER CAPITA PAYMENTS

Annual Report, Osage Indian Agency, Oklahoma, for fiscal year, 1931.

All revenues received from any source for the Osage Tribe, including moneys received for tribal grazing leases prior to allotment, in 1907, together with all revenues from tribal mineral leases to date, have been collected through the Osage Agency, deposited in the United States Treasury and after reserving and expending necessary amounts for administration purposes, balances remaining each year have been distributed equally in periodical payments to enrolled members of the tribe, or their heirs. Each per capita payment so distributed wholly or in part to June 30, 1931, has been in the following amounts:— (By fiscal years)

1890	10.50	1910	250.00
1	16.00	1	387.91
2	22.50	2	445.87
3	51.00	3	357.89
4	87.00	4	799.88
5	107.75	5	221.51
6	62.50	6	316.89
7	157.83	7	2719.88
8	343.25	8	3572.33
9	163.50	9	3930.00
1890	165.50	1920	8090.00
1	233.00	1	8600.00
2	167.50	2	7700.00
3	412.00	3	12400.00
4	336.50	4	11600.00
5	343.00	5	9300.00
6	217.00	6	13400.00
7	214.00	7	7700.00
8	162.00	8	5700.00
9	251.00	9	4050.00
1900	200.00	1920	2480.00
1	165.00	1	1365.00
2	174.00	Total	\$111,751.11
3	470.00		
4	168.00		
5	348.00		
6	291.00		
7	394.00		
8	232.00		
9	380.00		

(97L-25)

3013

908 Federal Reserve Bank Bldg.,

Kansas City, Missouri.

AIR MAIL.

October 21, 1932.

SPECIAL DELIVERY.

Director,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to Bureau telegram of October 18, 1932, directing that this office obtain from Agent J. E. Furger, and forward, any interesting details and sidelights for radio broadcast on Osage Indian Murders, W. K. Hale, et al. Attached hereto is the memorandum, dictated today by Agent Furger, requested in Bureau telegram of reference.

In connection with the unreasonable delay in submitting this information, it is stated that upon receipt of the telegram of October 18th, the writer endeavored to communicate with Agent Furger, who was then on sick leave and thought to be confined to his home. It was discovered upon investigation that Agent Furger had left Kansas City and his exact location was not known until sometime later, he being located by this office the night of October 20th. Agent Furger provided this office with no address during his absence from home, and the writer believes that appropriate explanation should be made by Agent Furger, and will, therefore, request that he prepare such statement as he may have and furnish the same to the Bureau upon his return to duty on Monday, October 24th.

It is the writer's impression at this time that Agent Furger did not intentionally fail to furnish an appropriate address and that probably his failure to do so was to some extent attributable to his illness. This, however, will probably be gone into more in detail by Agent Furger when his explanation is submitted to the Bureau.

Very truly yours,

Chapman Fletcher

Acting Special Agent in Charge.

CF-ebc
Encl.

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4 Kansas City, Missouri.
5 October 21, 1932.
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9 MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:
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11 RE: OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CASES,
12 WILLIAM K. HALE, ET AL.
13

14
15 HENRY ROAN, a full-blood Osage Indian, about forty years of age,
16 who, at the time he was murdered on or about January 26, 1923,
17 was living with his wife, also a full-blood Osage Indian, at
18 Fairfax, Oklahoma, was found murdered, three or four days after
19 death, apparently having been shot through the head, in a canyon
20 located about five miles northwest of Fairfax, Oklahoma.
21

22 About one year prior to Roan's death, W. K. (BILL) HALE, a wealthy
23 ranchman in Osage County, Oklahoma, obtained a \$25,000.00 insurance
24 policy on the life of Roan and conspired with JOHN RAMSAY, known as
25 the "Old Cow Farmer," living in Osage, Oklahoma, to lure Roan into
26 an isolated canyon, no road leading to this canyon, access being
27 by cow paths, over which Roan was induced by Cow Boy Ramsey, Hale's
28 co-spirator, to proceed in his car into this canyon to a point where
29 the automobile was completely obscured from human view. At this
30 desolate spot, Roan was induced by Cow Boy Ramsey to take a drink
31 of whisky, and while in the act of taking a drink of whisky, ap-
32 parently seated in the front seat of the car, Roan was shot in the
33 back of the head by Ramsey, on the promise of Hale that he would
34 give Ramsey a new Ford automobile and \$500.00 in cash. Roan's body
35 was found some five or six days after death by passing hunters.
36
37

38 Following the murder of Roan, W. E. (BILL) SMITH, MRS. RITA SMITH,
39 wife of Bill Smith, and NETTIE BROCKSHIRE, servant girl, Fairfax,
40 Oklahoma, were killed by a dynamite explosion, which demolished
41 Smith's home at Fairfax, Oklahoma, on March 10, 1925. W. E. (BILL)
42 and Rita Smith were full-blood Osage Indians, both having head-rights,
43 obtained through mineral and oil rights, as paid all full-blood
44 Osage Indians for royalty by the United States Government.
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ANNA BROWN, full-blood Osage Indian, Fairfax, Oklahoma, was found murdered, in an isolated canyon about four miles northeast of Fairfax, Oklahoma, at a point where there was no passing, or roads leading near the scene of murder. The body of Anna Brown was also discovered by hunters.

CHARLES WHITFORD, full-blood, Osage Indian, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, was found murdered, shot through the head, on Dial Hill, about two miles north of Pawhuska, Oklahoma, May 15, 1931, apparently having been lured to this isolated spot for the purpose of murdering him to obtain the rights and privileges of his oil royalties. His body was found by an oil driller, who reported the matter to the authorities.

Prior to the Government's entrance into this case, private detective agencies had made extensive investigations, with no results, other than to confuse informants and make it almost impossible for Government Agents to approach informants, including citizens and Indians, in an endeavor to obtain evidence with reference to the murders of the above named.

Vice-President Curtis, then Senior Senator from the District of Kansas, called to the attention of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director, United States Bureau of Investigation, the murdering of the above named Osage Indians at which time, Mr. Hoover directed Special Agent J. R. Burgess of the Kansas City office to make extensive investigations with reference to the motive for such murders, which investigation was made and an initial report by Agent Burgess was furnished to Mr. Hoover.

Other Government Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation were then dispatched by Director Hoover to the scenes of the crimes, these Agents being assigned under-cover, using different pretexts, such as insurance agents, Indian doctors, cattle buyers, and such other pretexts as would properly secure an approach to informants, in an effort to obtain true information with reference to the actual murder orders of the above named, with result that the evidence obtained was that:

W. F. (BILL) ROAN had conspired with EARL B. BURKHART, his partner, to arrange with John Ramsey, after getting him under the influence of liquor, for him, Burkhardt and Ramsey to lure Henry P. ROAN to an isolated canyon to indulge in drinking a gallon jug of whisky. Accordingly arrangements were made for Henry ROAN, Burkhardt, and Ramsey, near this isolated spot. On reaching the scene of the murder, John Ramsey invited Roan out of his car, to get out of his automobile, to take a drink of whisky, and while Roan was apparently endeavoring to leave the front seat of his automobile, Ramsey shot Roan in the back of the head with a .45 Colt

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*no; for
Henry*

him by Ernest Burkhart, the said pistol having been obtained from W. K. (Bill) Hale, with the understanding that Ramsey would shoot Roan with this pistol. Hale, in carrying out his promise to Ramsey, did arrange and buy Ramsey, who was a poor man, a Ford automobile at Ponca City, Oklahoma, and gave Ramsey \$500.00 in cash, which was later admitted in signed statements by both Ramsey and Burkhart. (This canyon, property allotted to a full-blood Osage Indian, never having been transferred, gave the Government jurisdiction in the murder of Henry Roan.) Hale and Ramsey were tried jointly for the murder of John Roan, and each was convicted in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. An appeal was taken by each defendant and the case reversed; the case was again tried at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, severance being granted to each defendant, each defendant was tried separately by a jury, and Hale and Ramsey each was convicted and sentenced to serve life imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, where they are now confined. ✓✓

Ernest Burkhart, turned state's evidence, and was used as a Government witness in the prosecution of both Hale and Ramsey. Burkhart later entered a plea of guilty in State Court at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary at McAlester, Oklahoma, where he is now confined.

A confession was obtained from KELSEY MORRISON by Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation in which he, Morrison, admitted enticing Anna Brown to an isolated canyon, where a pistol, ostensibly accidental, was discharged shooting Anna Brown in the back of the head, instantaneously killing her. Later, refuting his statement, Morrison was tried in State Court at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and was convicted by a jury in Oklahoma State Court and sentenced to serve life in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary.

The investigation in the murder of Anna Brown developed that W. K. (Bill) Hale and Kelsey Morrison had both been intimate with Anna Brown, and at the time of Anna Brown's death, she was pregnant and had openly stated that W. K. Hale was the father of her expected child, which caused Hale to conspire with Kelsey Morrison and his nephew, Bryan Burkhart, to get Anna Brown under the influence of liquor and lure her to this canyon and shoot her, in order to avoid Hale disgrace and embarrassment.

Further, in the murdering of Anna Brown, who was a sister of Ernest Burkhart's wife, the head-right of the land, which at that time was \$5,000. a year, would go to the estate of Ernest Burkhart's wife upon Anna Brown's death.

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6 It may be well to mention at this time that upon the death of Rita
7 Smith and Anna Brown, sisters, their oil royalties or headrights
8 would have gone to the estate of their sister, Mollie Burkhart, Ernest
9 Burkhart's wife, and Hale would have eventually gained control of these
0 headrights.

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2 The Government's investigation developed with reference to the Charles
3 Whitehorn murder that his wife was of questionable character and had on
4 several occasions kept company with the parties who were last seen in
5 company with Whitehorn. The Government, not having jurisdiction in this
6 case, did not follow this case to conclusion, other than the questioning
7 of Hattie Whitehorn, wife of Charles Whitehorn, who told two or three
8 different stories with reference to the last time she had seen her husband
9 Charles Whitehorn, and the parties last seen with him.

0
1 One very noticeable thing in the Government's investigation of the above
2 murder cases is that there had not been one single murder of Osage Indians
3 since Director Hoover first assigned Agent C. R. Burger on these cases,
4 neither has there been a murder of an Osage Indian under suspicious circum-
5 stances, and Mr. Luhring, then First Assistant United States Attorney
6 General in the Criminal Division, assisted in the prosecution of W. K.
7 Hale and John Ramsey. Mr. Luhring commented that this was one of the
8 biggest criminal cases the Government had ever tried, being the most
9 complicated and requiring more precaution and patience in investigation
0 to obtain necessary results for a successful prosecution than any case
1 coming under his observation in thirty years.

2
3 In view of the fact that W. K. (Bill) Hale was the owner of a big ranch
4 consisting of thirty thousand acres, well stocked, reputed to be worth
5 \$1,000,000.00 at the time of this investigation was started, and the fact
6 that there had been several murders, caused people to openly denounce
7 Bill Hale as being the instigator of the murders of these Indians to
8 benefit financially therefrom. For instance, Bill Smith openly denounced
9 Bill Hale as having Henry Roan and Anna Brown murdered, and two days
0 later his house was blown up, the explosion killing Smith and his entire
1 family, including himself, wife and servant girl.

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During the course of this investigation, it developed that Ernest Burkhart, nephew of Bill Hale, was rather talkative, and apparently easily influenced by his uncle, W. K. (BILL) Hale, therefore, it was decided by the Agents assigned to this case by Director Hoover to interview Ernest Burkhart and lay before him all the facts as obtained from other sources, which resulted in Ernest Burkhart making to the Government a complete confession and statement in writing, in which he stated that the murder of Henry Roan was prompted by W. K. Hale and Roan was actually killed by John Ramsey; that the home of Bill Smith had been blown up at the request of W. K. (Bill) Hale by one ACIE KIRBY (then deceased); that Hale had made arrangements with him, Burkhart, to have Acie Kirby blow up the home of Bill Smith, as above related; that Anna Brown was murdered, shot by Kelsie Morrison in the canyon, arrangements having been made by Bill Hale for him, Burkhart, to first get Anna Brown under the influence of liquor and take her to this isolated canyon where he, Morrison, shot her in the back of the head with a pistol and left her in this canyon.

.....

Agent, being ill, and not having access to the file, which is in Oklahoma City, the above is perhaps rather disjointed, however, the story Agent has decided to parlay, and this is stated in view of the fact that reference telegram indicated this matter may be used in connection with a story for radio broadcast, is:

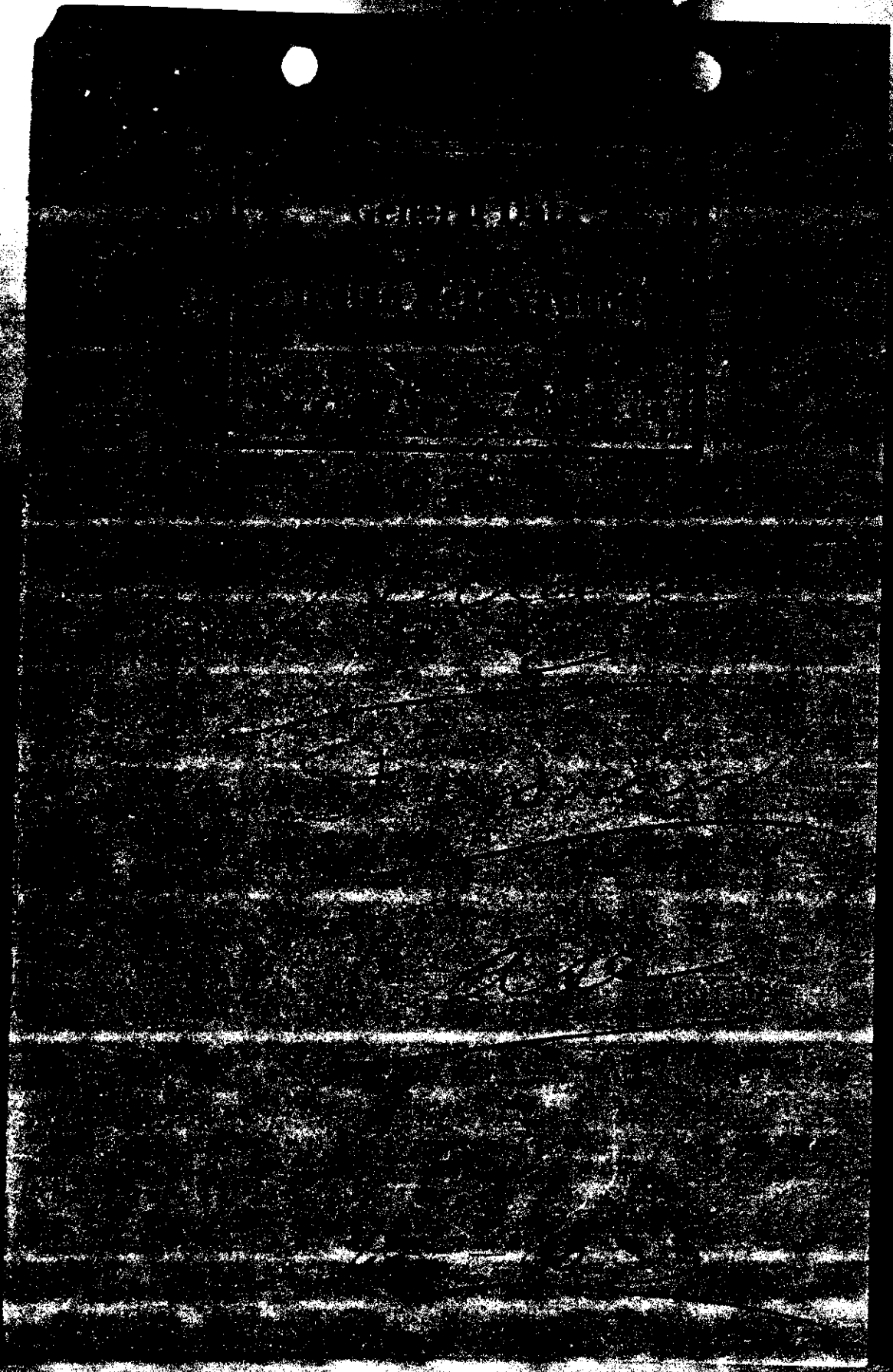
Scenes of the several murders, including the canyon murder scenes, first getting the victims intoxicated, the explosion of the home, killing three people, after the head of the house had denounced the millionaire Hale, the death of Anna Brown, openly accusing again the millionaire Hale, and the local authorities having failed to ascertain any information as to the criminals. Presentation to the United States Bureau of Investigation by Vice-President Curtis; assignment of Agents of this Bureau, under cover, gathering of information by Agents of this Bureau and taking such information to the nephew of the master mind of the murder plot, breaking him and obtaining his confession, together with the results of sending the several participants in the plot to prison for life.

Respectfully,

J. R. Burger
Special Agent.

JRB-c

3019



United States Department of the Interior
Office of Indian Affairs

General Data
concerning
Indian Reservations

[Revised to June 30, 1929]

Prepared under direction of
The Commissioner of Indian Affairs

October 15, 1929



United States
Government Printing Office
Washington : 1930

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. - - - - - Price 5 cents

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